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Senior Health and Wellness Newsletter

Kentucky Department for Aging and Independent Living

ALZHEIMER'S THE EARLY SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Alzheimer's or other forms of Dementia may cause memory loss that disrupts daily life. Alzheimer's can cause a slow decline in memory, thinking, and reasoning skills. Knowing the warning signs may help you and your family identify the difference between normal aging and Alzheimer's.

1. **Memory Loss that Disrupts Daily Life-**

May cause memory loss, forgetting recently learned information, forgetting important dates or events, asking the same information over and over, increase need for memory aids/family for things that were managed.

What's a typical age-related change?

Sometimes forgetting names and appointments, but remembering them later.

2. **Challenges in Planning or Solving Problems -**

May experience changes in the ability to develop and follow a plan or work with numbers, have trouble following a familiar recipe or keeping track of monthly bills, have difficulty concentrating and take much longer to do things than they did before.

What's a typical age-related change?

Making occasional errors when balancing a checkbook



3. **Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, at work or at leisure -**

May cause daily tasks to be difficult to complete. Some may have difficulty driving to familiar location, managing a budget, and remembering rules of a favorite game.

What's a typical age-related change?

Occasionally needing help to use the settings on a microwave or to record a television show.

4. **Confusion with time or place -**

May lose track of dates, seasons, and passages of time. Sometimes they forget where they are or how they got there.

What's a typical age-related change?

Getting confused about the day of the week but figuring it out later.

5. **Trouble Understanding Visual Images and Spatial Relationships** - Difficulty reading, judging distance and determining color or contrast, which may cause problems driving. *What's a typical age-related change? Vision changes related to cataracts*
6. **New problems with words in speaking or writing** - May cause someone to have a difficult time following or joining a conversation. They may struggle with vocabulary by having difficulty finding the right word. *What's a typical age-related change? Sometimes having trouble finding the right word.*
7. **Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps** - May put things in strange places, lose things and unable to trace their steps to find them, accuse others of stealing. *What's a typical age-related change? Misplacing things from time to time and retracing steps to find them.*
8. **Decreased or Poor Judgment** - May experience changes in judgment or decision-making, pay less attention to grooming or keeping themselves clean. *What's a typical age-related change? Making a bad decision once in a while.*
9. **Withdrawal from work or social activities** - May remove themselves from hobbies, activities, work projects, or sports, having difficulty remembering how to completing a favorite hobby. *What's a typical age-related change? Sometimes feeling weary of work, family and social obligations.*
10. **Changes in mood and personality** - May have mood or personality changes, they become confused, suspicious, depressed, or anxious. Easily upset if out of their comfort zone. *What's a typical age-related change? Developing a very specific ways of doing things and becoming irritable when a routine is disrupted.*

If you notice any of the 10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's in yourself or someone you know, don't ignore them. Schedule an appointment with your doctor!

References:

<http://www.alz.org/10-signs-symptoms-alzheimers-dementia.asp>

Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline: (800) 272-3900 info@alz.org

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